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Self-Development Reflection Journal for Students

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SELF-DEVELOPMENT REFLECTION JOURNAL FOR STUDENTS

Margaret Shu-Mei Sass, EdD, JD



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By Margaret Shu-Mei Sass, EdD, JD

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WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF HIGHER ED!

Welcome to journal for self-development while you are attending college! You are on your way to a great cultural adventure, an academic journey, and a self-reflective voyage. This handbook provides an opportunity for you to understand your own personal and professional path throughout your college experience. You have now entered a new world of opportunity and endless possibilities. Take advantage of this academic expedition and explore!

How this handbook works:

- Complete pre-entry reflection
- Complete the college experience
- Complete multicultural activity
- Fill out “what is your level of cultural competence?”
- Look over goal setting guidelines
- Have fun and fill out the bucket list!
- Complete the plan of action for cultural competence—learning more about ethnicities
- Start the self-development daily journal
- End of the year with the self-analysis and the overall reflection

PRE-ENTRY REFLECTION

1. Why did you choose to go to college?

2. When do you plan to graduate?

3. What do you expect to learn about yourself?

4. How does this particular school relate to your career path?

5. What do you think culture shock is?

6. Do you expect to have culture shock once you arrive? Why or why not?

7. Is there anyone you can talk to about attending this college prior to arrival?

8. How are you preparing to communicate with roommates? Other students? Faculty?

9. What do you know about the school you are attending?

10. What concerns you the most about college?

11. How are you feeling right now about college?

[illegible]

THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

1. Describe your college campus (1) politically, (2) geographically, and (3) culturally.

2. What do you expect to see once you arrive?

3. What do you plan to visit while you are there?

4. What is your plan of action if you get lost?

5. Where do most students live?

6. What extracurricular activities are most popular among students?

Research some of the current events occurring on campus. What do you plan on doing in the next 6 months?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

TEAMWORK ACTIVITY

Listed below are suggested teamwork or individual activities to create a more collaborative and interpersonal environment with other students in your classes, dorm, or clubs:

- Complete a community service project at a food bank, a community center, a school, etc. that represents a population you are unfamiliar with. Think about what you want to accomplish for the organization and for the group.
- Go to a restaurant serving the local cuisine, locally grown fruit and vegetables.
- Watch an inspiring movie at the local movie theatre.
- Volunteer at a cultural center that represents the multicultural make-up of your school.
- Ask another student (junior or senior) to be your mentor that is majoring in the same area.
- Create a blog and/or create an email dialogue with other students in other colleges/universities. Invite others to participate or create a “team” page to blog.
- Attend a special event as a concert, food festival, etc. that may expose you to that culture or other different cultures in the local area. Think about your own ethnicity and how its represented in the community. How is it represented at your school?
- Do a search on YouTube and find videos about your school or the city in which it’s located. Are they academic clips? Are some done by students and entertaining? Would you consider creating a YouTube clip for high school students that will attend your college in the near future?
- Join an association or group that supports your favorite hobby.
- Join an association or group that represents your major.
- Volunteer at a local nursing home and learn from the “locals” that retired here.
- Meet another student from a different country and become friends. Learn about each other’s culture.

1. What activity did you do?

2. Explain the experience. What did you learn?

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WHAT IS YOUR LEVEL OF CULTURAL COMPETENCE?

Please read each of the following statements and rate the extent to which you agree with each one of them by using the scale provided (1 being low, 5 being high):

1. Rate your level of knowledge on world views.

1 2 3 4 5

2. Rate your level of knowledge on different ethnic groups.

1 2 3 4 5

3. What is your perception of different cultural groups?

4. What is your perception of different countries?

5. What is your level of interaction with different ethnic groups?

6. What is your attitude towards individuals that do not speak English?

7. Do you seek out individuals different from yourself to learn more about their culture?

8. What is your knowledge of other cultures? Explain

9. How would you describe your level of respect for other cultures and ethnic groups?
What would you like to change regarding your actions toward individuals different from yourself?

10. Do you act different nonverbally with different ethnic groups?

GOAL SETTING GUIDELINES

1. List at least 5 goals you would like to accomplish this year.

2. Provide a plan on how you'll meet these goals.

3. What is your reward for each goal? List them.

4. Check off each goal once you meet it and celebrate!

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 20 sets of three horizontal lines (top, middle, and bottom lines) for letter formation.

BUCKET LIST

Below, list everything you want to accomplish before you die. And I mean everything! Check it off once you've completed.

[illegible]

PLAN OF ACTION FOR CULTURAL COMPETENCE— LEARNING MORE ABOUT ETHNICITIES

In order to be more culturally competent as an individual and as an employee, reflect on how you can become more knowledgeable about different ethnicities and cultures at your school and within the local community.

AREA OF KNOWLEDGE TO WORK ON	CURRENT KNOWLEDGE	ACTIONS TO INCREASE KNOWLEDGE
Ethnicities represented at your college		
Business etiquette for different ethnicities		
Religions represented in the community		
Nonverbal communication among the different ethnicities		
Particular gestures different from your own culture		
Political activities on campus and in the community		

AREA OF KNOWLEDGE TO WORK ON	CURRENT KNOWLEDGE	ACTIONS TO INCREASE KNOWLEDGE
Geographical location		
Local Traditions		
Common Language and Barriers		
Climate (business) (school)		
Climate (weather)		
Eating etiquette (businesses) (school)		
Forms of respect (businesses) (schools)		
Forms of disrespect (businesses) (schools)		
Organizational structure of the college		

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College allows me to
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1 2 3 4 5

College helps me learn
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END OF THE YEAR SELF-ANALYSIS

Question/thoughts to ponder:

- Define your last year and the purpose.
- Define what activities you performed and with whom.
- What did those experiences mean to you?
- Have your goals changed from the beginning of your journaling till now?
- Did any academic information you learned help you with your current job?
- Is there anything you learned that was unexpected? Explain.
- Did you accomplish everything you set out to do?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

This image shows a full page of blank handwriting practice paper. It features approximately 28 evenly spaced horizontal blue lines across the entire page, providing a guide for letter height and placement. The lines are uniform in color and thickness, set against a plain white background. There are no margins, text, or other markings present.

OVERALL REFLECTION

1. How satisfied were you with the last year?

2. Did you learn what you expected to learn?

3. What important things did you learn? Was that mainly in the classroom, at different events, etc?

4. How do you think this last year related to your career path? Explain.

5. Do you think this last academic year related to your future job's objectives and duties? Explain.

6. Did you have culture shock?

7. If you did have culture shock, how did you manage it?

8. Were you able to communicate effectively with other students? Faculty?

9. Did you notice any particular nonverbal actions and/or gestures different from your own? What were they?

10. Is there anyone you talked to about your experiences in the last year?

11. What did you learn about your college?

12. How are you feeling right now about your college experience?

13. Is there anything you will do differently in the next year?

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**For more information, please contact
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By Margaret Shu-Mei Sass © 2013